Frank Lloyd Wright Residence and Studio
428 Forest Avenue
Oak Park
Cook County
Illinois

HABS No. IL-1099

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
801 - 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

HABS ILL, 16-OAKPA,

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY HABS No. ILL-1099

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT RESIDENCE AND STUDIO

Location: House: 428 Forest Avenue; Studio: 951 Chicago Avenue, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois.

Present Owner: Clyde W. Nooker, 428 Forest Avenue, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois.

Present Occupants: Clyde W. Nooker and tenants. Present structure is used as a four family dwelling.

Present Use: Residence, open publicly as a museum; admission is charged.

Statement of Significance: This structure, consisting of a group of buildings, includes the first residence Frank Lloyd Wright built for himself. His home, built in 1889, shows the assimilation of the Eastern "Shingle Style," though giving evidence of an already present tendency to simplify and unify. Similarly, the Studio wing, added in 1895, shows early experimentation with the open plan. Together, the House and Studio are a source and proving ground for ideas and forms which were put to dramatic use throughout Wright's career.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Legal description: West two hundred and five feet (205') of lot 20, in Block 2 of Kettlestrings' Addition to Harlem, a Subdivision of the eastern half of the northwest quarter of Section 7, Township 39N, Range 13E, of the third principal meridian of Cook County.

   Chain of title, west half of the lot. From the Chicago Title and Trust Company, tract book 133-1: The entire lot 20 of the block was the property of Henry W. Austin, and was sold to Jane Blair and husband, July 27, 1866 (Document 108596). The Blairs sold the west 165 feet of lot 20 to Frank Lloyd Wright, August 5, 1889, (Document 1144391).

   Wright placed the deed in trust with Louis H. Sullivan, August 17, 1889 (Document 1144392), and Sullivan then placed the deed in trust with Henry W. Austin, August 20, 1889 (Document 1144393). Louis Sullivan released the

deed to Catherine Wright, August 3, 1893 (Document 1914473). Catherine Wright had shortly before put the deed in trust with Nathanial M. Jones, July 25, 1893 (Document 1911877). The deed, which was placed in the name of Frank L. Wright, August 10, 1893 (Document 1933062), was placed in trust with William A. Ostenfeldt, January 9, 1894 (Document 1979596). The deed was again transferred to Catherine Wright, July 1, 1895 (Document 2244065) and placed in trust a second time with Nathanial M. Jones, July 1, 1895 (Document 2244066). One week later, on July 8, 1895, Nathanial Jones released the first lien against the property, document 11911877 (Document 2246178). On the same date, William Ostenfeldt released his lien against the property, document 1979596 (Document 2246179). Catherine Wright placed the deed in trust with William T. Rickards, July 8, 1898 (Document 2710050). Later that year, Nathanial Jones released the second lien he had against the property, document 2244066 on August 3, 1898 (Document 2717161). William Rickards released his lien against the property, document 2710050, July 15, 1903. Anna L. Wright, mother of Frank L. Wright, surrendered the west 40 feet of her eastern half of lot 20 to her son, May 23, 1911 (Document 4785720). (See the following chain of title for the eastern half of the lot.) The aggregate property, now 205 feet long, was placed by Catherine Wright in trust to Darwin D. Martin, June 20, 1911 (Document 4785721). Catherine Wright sold the property to Alva Thomas and John Bastear jointly, January (?), 1925 (Document 8975059). Alva Thomas and John Bastear placed the deed in trust with the Chicago Title and Trust Co., July 1, 1925 (Document 8975061). John Bastear sold his interest in the lot to Alva Thomas, July 30, 1929 (Document 10442382). Alva Thomas sold the property to Toby Carlson, September 3, 1929 (Document 10517335). Toby Carlson sold the property to May B. Conway, November 30, 1929 (Document 10552638). May Conway sold the property to Anna Kulisek, January 27, 1930 (Document 10610040). Suit was brought by Martin against Bastear et al. on August 27, 1930 for the west 205 feet of the lot. The dispute had to do with transaction document 8975061. The outcome of the suit was that the deed was granted by the court to the Buffalo-Phoenix Corp., November 2, 1934 (Document 11521526). The Buffalo-Phoenix Corp. sold the property to Norman Beggs, January 2, 1943 (Document 13043307). Beggs sold the property to Clyde W. Nooker, October 3, 1946 (Document 13926675). The Nookers have retained possession of the property since that date.

Chain of title, east half of the lot: Jane Blair sold the eastern 165 feet of lot 20 to Anna L. Wright, August

21, 1889 (Document 115183). Mrs. Wright kept the property through having a succession of mortgages on the property. The western 40 feet of her lot, Mrs. Wright deeded to her son, Frank Lloyd Wright, May 23, 1911 (Document 4785720). The remainder of her lot, the eastern 125 feet, Mrs. Wright sold to Jane L. W. Porter, April 18, 1918 (Document 6308467). From that time on the lot has remained separate from the Wright estate.

2. Date of erection: House was begun in 1889; major additions were added in 1895.

3. Architect, builder, suppliers, etc.: Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959). The contractor was presumably Frank Lloyd Wright. The earliest building permit for this house on record in Oak Park is number 11836, dated May 20, 1922. It was issued to Frank Lloyd Wright, and granted permission to "owner" to construct on the site miscellaneous alterations. If a similar procedure was followed in the two earlier building campaigns in 1889 and 1895, the contractor or builder would have been Wright also.

4. Original plans, construction, etc.: In 1889, the first stage of the house was a relatively simple affair. It consisted of an entry hall, living room, dining room and kitchen. In the center of the house was a fireplace with its inglenook. The upper floor contained a large studio over the living room with a chamber and bedroom behind. /Henry Russel Hitchcock, In the Nature of Materials (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1942), plans, plate 12./

   The sculptural frieze in the stairhall, plate 13, is a miniature reproduction of the frieze of the Great Zeus Altar, Pergamon. Four panels of Sullivan ornament, from the Auditorium, are inserted into the living room ceiling at the corners. One of these panels, with a light hanging from the center, can also be seen in plate 13. For analyses and discussions of the origin of the parti, see Supplementary Material.

5. Alterations and additions: In 1893 or 1894, according to Grant Carpenter Manson, Frank Lloyd Wright to 1910: The First Golden Age (New York: Reinhold, 1958), sometime between these two years, Wright was able to enlarge the house, erecting a new kitchen to the west, and changing the old kitchen into a new dining room. This new dining room was extended by a bay to the south. See plate 15, Hitchcock, op. cit. Above the new kitchen, the large

barrel-vaulted playroom was built. See plate 16, ibid. It may be that the mortgage made by Wright with Nathanial Jones in 1893 financed this expansion.

In 1895 a contract negotiated with the Luxfer Prism Company allowed Wright not only to pay off two mortgages which he had on his home with Nathanial Jones and William Ostenfeldt (July 8, 1895), but also to erect a group of office structures to the north of his home, which became known as "The Studio." The studio consisted of an entrance loggia which opened into a reception hall. To the left of the reception hall was a large two story area, the draughting room; to the right of the hall through a short corridor, was the library. Behind the reception hall and isolated from the other spaces, was Wright's private office. In contrast to the house, in which the exterior form was the dominant element originally, the spaces of the studio complex were articulately expressed in the exterior elevation.

At an uncertain date in 1911, sometime after his return from Europe, Wright did some alterations of the interior of the house. It was perhaps at this time that an upper floor was placed in the two story studio.

May 20, 1922, Oak Park Building Permit, No. 11836. Frank Lloyd Wright, owner and contractor, was permitted to perform alterations in the house. Exact nature was unspecified. Estimated cost: $200.00.

July 10, 1956, Oak Park Building Permit, No. 28103. Permission is given to Clyde Nooker to have Pyle Brothers, contractor, carry out certain alterations on the interior of the house, allowing it to be used as a four family dwelling. Estimated cost: $1,000.00. Alterations moving the kitchen and providing space for a breakfast room.

B. Sources of Information:

1. Unpublished sources:

Chicago Architectural Photographic Company, Chicago, Illinois.
Photograph of an interior detail, showing radiator cover and window. Photograph of the entrance end of the children's playroom (Fig. 29 in Manson, op. cit.). No photograph numbers.

Drawings of the House and Studio are at Taliesin, Spring Green, Wisconsin; negative photostat copies are at the

American Institute of Architects headquarters, Washington, D.C. Four sheets.

2. Published sources:

Barney, Maginel Wright. The Valley of the God-Almighty Joneses. New York: Appleton-Century, 1965.
Description of the house and its site, pp. 128-29.

Drury, John. Historic Midwest Houses. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1947.
Discussion of house and studio, pp. 75-77. One exterior photograph.

Hitchcock, Henry Russel. "Frank Lloyd Wright and the Academic Tradition of the Early Eighteen-nineties," Warburg Journal, VII, No. 1-2 (January-June 1944), pp. 46-63.
Plans and illustrations. Discussion to demonstrate why Burnham approached Wright to go to Rome to the American Academy. Places Wright in his early Chicago ambient.

_____. In the Nature of Materials. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1942.
The comprehensive monograph and catalog of the work of Wright up to 1942. Contains a short discussion of the House and Studio, with five photographs and two plans of the house, and three photographs and a plan of the studio.

Inland Architect and News Record, XXIV, No. 6 (January 1896).
The first publication of the House. One plate. Caption on page 62: "Residence by Architect Frank L. Wright, for himself, at Oak Park, Illinois."

Manson, Grant Carpenter. Frank Lloyd Wright to 1910: The First Golden Age. New York: Reinhold, 1958.
Detailed analysis of the first period of Wright. Description in depth of the development of the House and Studio, pp. 43-48, 88-93. Five photographs of the house, one plan; six photographs of the studio, one plan.

Scully, Vincent J., Jr. Frank Lloyd Wright. New York: Braziller, 1960.
Picks up the theme introduced by the Shingle Style and extends it throughout the career of Wright. Discusses Wright in the context of his contemporary architects and artists, bringing out various sources and possible influences.

_____. The Shingle Style. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955.
Subtitle explains the thesis: architectural theory and design from Richardson to the origins of Wright. Shows the long heritage which Wright had behind him.

Spencer, Robert C., Jr. "The Work of Frank Lloyd Wright From 1893 to 1900," The Architectural Review (Boston), VII, No. 6 (June 1900), pp. 61-72.
First major publication of Wright's work. Photographs of the Studio interiors, p. 65. Drawing of the exterior of the Studio, plate XXXVIII. Republished by the Prairie School Press, Park Forest, Illinois, 196?.

Wright, Frank Lloyd. An Autobiography. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1932; New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1943.
Comprehensive statement on the life and circumstances of the architect. Scattered references to the House appear from pages 106-120.

_____. Ausgeführte Bauten und Entwürfe von Frank Lloyd Wright. Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth, 1910. Republished: Buildings, Plans and Designs. New York: Horizon Press, 1963.
The early and complete monograph of the work of Wright up to 1910. Studio is shown on plate 9.

_____. "In the Cause of Architecture," Architectural Record, XXVIII (March 1908), pp. 155-221.
Second major publication of Wright's work. Contains three photographs of the Studio.

C. Supplemental Information:

"We finally left Mrs. Chapin's /Reverend Augusta Chapin, Universalist minister/ and Mother and Frank together bought a large piece of property on the corner of Forest and Chicago Avenues. We lived in the house on the lot. It was white and like Uncle Enos', it had scalloped eaves with a wooden teardrop at each corner. There were great oaks in the yard with trunks wrapped in woodbine; there was a beautiful tulip tree; its fancy flowers smelled like cinnamon. The property had belonged to a landscape gardener named Blair, who had laid out Lincoln Park, so the planting was beautiful. We had every variety of lilac, snowball, and spirea. And in the spring flowers sprang up along the fence: violets, white and blue, wild ginger, and lilies of the valley."

/Maginel Wright Barney, The Valley of the God-Almighty Joneses (New York: Appleton-Century, 1965), pp. 128-129./

"The extensive terrace at the front, forming in Wright's own image a stylobate, and the almost unbroken roof, with the gable coming forward to crown the bay windows below, provide a sort of domestic analogy to the base, shaft and cap treatment of the Wainwright Building. This terrace is also the earliest instance of Wright's mature practice of relating his houses closely to the earth. The undivided roof, subsuming subordinate elements beneath, is the first step toward those hovering planes parallel with the flat prairie which are the hallmark of his best-known later houses.

"The widened doorways in the interior appear to be of the type ubiquitous throughout the eighties, but there is a marked and indeed, a crucial change in their expression (Fig. 13, 14). The door openings have no surrounding architraves. Instead a string course, continued around the room below the cornice and related to the pattern of articulated plaster beams and panels on the ceiling, defines their top; and the walls beneath this string are pulled back, as it were, to form the openings. Because of this device the interior space is really sensed as a unity, as it only appears to be in the ordinary houses of the day when studied in plan.

"Otherwise the plan is not extraordinary (Fig. 12). As in many Eastern houses even of the next decade, there is a Queen Anne hall which is a small room, not a mere entry, but filled with rather elaborate stairs. This opens into a larger living room, which in turn opens into a dining room behind, while pantry and kitchen fill out the square. The chimney at the center of the house provides both for the kitchen stove and for a living room fireplace. This fireplace is set in an inglenook in the Queen Anne tradition. But the inglenook is here not so much an atavism as an early hint of the way Wright was to break up the cubic form of his main rooms in the next decade. Similar plans were used by Wright in the nineties for many houses, even after he left Sullivan, wherever economy demanded compactness."

/Henry Russel Hitchcock, In the Nature of Materials (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1942), pp. 17-18./

"Wright's own studio, contiguous to his Oak Park house, breaks wholly and all but finally with the picturesque tradition of the Williams house (Fig. 39, 40). The functional asymmetry is now much more formal. The interplay of planes, building up from parapet and terrace to the different levels of the articulated mass, expresses a new and wholly personal sort of order. This can be read more clearly in the plans and drawings than in the actual building which is of necessity rather jammed in between the street and the pre-existing house (Fig. 38, 41).

"Ceiling grilles for overhead light, still somewhat Sullivan-like in their curved though geometrical tracery, had first appeared in the dining room and the playroom added to the house just before this (Fig. 15, 16). But in the large octagon and square grille which forms practically the entire ceiling of the draughting room, itself an octagon rising out of a square in three dimensions, we see for the first time the mature results of that training in pattern-making with geometrical elements which Wright had received from the Froebel kindergarten method fifteen years and more earlier."

/Ibid., pp. 26-27./

"Wright, after having read, he tells us, Ruskin, Viollet-le-Duc, and Owen Jones,[11] and having spent something under two years in engineering school at Madison, Wisconsin went to Chicago and worked for James Lyman Silsbee, an architect of the Shingle Style. He soon left Silsbee and entered the office of Adler and Sullivan, but when, in 1889, he built his own house in Oak Park, he modelled it closely upon the published designs of two shingled houses of 1885-86 by Bruce Price, at Tuxedo Park, New York (plates 6,7). The two bays of Wright's facade derived from Price's Chandler House, as I have shown elsewhere,[12] but his general proportions are closer to those of Price's Kent House, which is reproduced here (plates 4,5). We should note that it was the abstract clarity of Price's exterior to which Wright was sensitive at this time. He was not yet interested in the abstract spatial order, created by cross-axes, which existed in Price's plan. Wright's own interior was therefore considerably less coherent than Price's and broke less out of "the box" than Price's had already done. But it does show, in its handling of partitions as separated panels under a continuous horizontal molding (derived during the seventies and eighties from the Japanese kamoi and ramma) a clear understanding of how to open up but still articulate interior space as that technique had been developed and published by Stanford White and other architects during the eighties.[13] The twin themes of spatial continuity and geometric order are thus both explicitly stated but totally unintegrated in Wright's first significant personal design."

Notes: [11]Frank Lloyd Wright, An Autobiography, New York, 1943, p. 75.

[12]The Shingle Style, pp. 126-129, 159, figs. 108-110, 155, 156.

[13]Ibid., figs. 114, 115, 121-125.

/Vincent J. Scully, Jr, Frank Lloyd Wright (New York: Braziller, 1960), pp. 14-15./

"Wright's introduction to domestic building came in 1887 in the office of an architect who was at that time a practitioner of the free shingle style, namely Joseph Lyman Silsbee, who had come to Chicago from Syracuse in 1885.[10] From him Wright got a sense of picturesque shingled design at the moment when it was beginning to move toward a certain order. Drawings by Wright of houses designed by Silsbee appeared in the Inland Architect in 1888.[11] After leaving Silsbee and joining the firm of Adler and Sullivan, Wright built his own house at Oak Park in 1889 (Fig. 155). A shingled structure, set upon a terrace, and with a gabled roof, it relates visually to McKim, Mead, and White's Low House of 1887, to Stephens' gabled houses, and most of all to the houses which Bruce Price built at Tuxedo Park, 1885-86. These of course were published in Sheldon, /George Sheldon, Artistic Country Seats/ which was available to Wright (Figs. 108-10). Moreover, Wright's house--with its terrace, its strong gable, and its window arrangement--is a very close adaptation of Price's W. Chandler Cottage, also at Tuxedo Park and of 1885-86 (Fig. 156). This was published in the periodical Building in 1886 and was therefore also available to Wright.[12] Wright, at the beginning of his career, was thus seeking direct inspiration from the masters of the developed shingle style, and especially from Bruce Price. He seems to have seized especially upon the essential forms toward which Price and the others had developed, beginning as here, with the decisive and archetypal gable. Hence the articulated and interwoven spaces of Wright's houses continue the spatial order of the cottages of the early 80's. Wright also further assimilates Japanese influences (Fig. 157; see also Figs. 121, 123-5, 130).[13]"

/Vincent J. Scully, Jr, The Shingle Style (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), pp. 158-159./

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This structure, consisting of a group of buildings, includes the first residence Frank Lloyd Wright built for himself. His home, built in 1889, shows the assimilation of the Eastern "Shingle Style," though giving evidence of an already present tendency to simplify and unify. Similarly, the Studio wing, added in 1895, shows early experimentation with the open plan. Together, the House and Studio are a source and proving ground for ideas and forms which were put to dramatic use throughout Wright's career.

b. Windows: In general, the windows of the house are casements leaded with clear glass in an over-all diamond pattern, while those of the studio have a pattern of cames close to and parallelingthe frame of the sash with the rest of the glass. In both buildings, there are some casements glazed simply in clear glass. The south bedroom of the house has a clerestory window facing south. This has a pattern of cames similar to those used in the studio but here the center pane of glass is colored yellow.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: The house roof is a steep gable covered with black composition shingles. Dormers projecting from this roof are flat and have built-up roofing. The studio has several levels of flat roofs. The octagons of the drafting room and of the library are roofed in pointed, eight-sided roofs, tarred black. A shingle-surfaced parapet almost completely conceals the octagonal roof of the drafting room. That of the studio is of shallow pitch and unobtrusive.

b. Eaves: The gable end of the house has no eaves. Cantilevered eaves at the studio accentuate its horizontality. Since these eaves are constructed of wood, the permanent set which this material takes with time has caused considerable drooping.

c. Dormers: The dormers in the steep roof of the front bedroom light the upper volume of this room through small, long windows. There is one dormer at each side of the room.

9. Sculpture: At the second floor level of the studio there is repeated five times at the angles of the octagon a pair of seated figures from which hangs a scroll-like object. At the entrance foyer are eight short columns whose upper surfaces are decorated with a repetition of the same bas-relief in green terra cotta terra: a stork, a roll of drawings and a book of specifications.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

a. First floor: The front of the house faces west, toward Forest Avenue, with the living room to the north and the stair wall to the south. The front door is at the center of the front hall with bay windows to

2. Condition of fabric: The house, good; the studio, fair: there are many instances of unequal settlement.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The house and studio constitute two long rectangles in plan placed parallel and slightly separated from one another with a small linking unit between. The house is two stories raised about four feet from the ground. The studio is built about two feet above ground level, is two stories in height at the drafting room portion and one story elsewhere.

2. Foundations: The foundations of both buildings project beyond the wall line visually establishing a base for the walls. The concrete is scored vertically at intervals of six feet, and in most cases has cracked at the scoring. The concrete is natural grey in color and years of weathering have eroded the cement enough to reveal the texture of its fine aggregate.

3. Wall construction, finish, color: Walls are of common brick and of wood frame clad in dark brown shingles. The brick is used for basement walls of the house and for its front porch wall. At the studio, the library octagon is brick up to its ceiling, as is the foyer, but elsewhere the brick is generally brought up to window sill height. The brick is common brick, has flush mortar joints of natural colored mortar. The brick is laid without header courses, suggesting veneer over wood frames. The brick color is varied. inside plaster

4. Structural system, framing: Wood frame.

5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads: The bulkheads are of brick capped with limestone or concrete. There is a screened, flat-roofed front porch on the west side of the house. The studio entrance is sheltered by a cantilevered trellis.

6. Chimneys: The chimneys are tall wide planes of brick capped with concrete.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: Of note are the French doors leading from the private office of the studio (in the link connecting house and studio) to the garden. These doors have a pattern of leading and small squares of green glass.

each side. One enters, then, directly into the living room. Opposite the front door, across the living room, is the central inglenook containing the fireplace. Through a wide doorway in the south wall of the living room one proceeds to the stair hall from which one may ascend to the second floor or descend, passing under the stairs, to a small entrance leading directly to the driveway running in the narrow space between the south side of the house and the south property line. Behind the living room, along the north side of the house, the original dining room adjoins the living room through a wide doorway. From the south side of this room one may pass through a butler's pantry that is in back of the central fireplace to the newer dining room that projects out of the south side of the house. This dining room also connects with the stair hall. Behind this second range of rooms are, presumably, the kitchen and other service rooms.

b. Second floor of house: The largest bedroom crosses the front of the house. Its ceiling rises into the volume of the peaked roof. Two smaller bedrooms are located behind the first bedroom, facing north and south respectively. A central hall leads to the rear where one enters the narrow end of the playroom, a room rectangular in plan, with a half cylindrical ceiling.

c. First floor of studio: This floor of the studio consists of four rooms. Three of these are placed in line along Chicago Avenue, and one enters the middle room, the foyer, on one of the long sides of its long, rectangular form. This faces north. To the right (west) is the tall octagon of the library. To the left (east) is the drafting room. Directly beyond the foyer is a room that was Wright's private office. Its windows look out over a private garden to the west.

2. Stairway: The stairway follows around the walls of the small stair hall. The treads and risers are of oak.

3. Flooring: The flooring in the house is oak strips, except in the newer dining room, where red, unglazed tile 2" x 4" in size have been laid. The first floor of the studio is floored in what appears to be painted concrete. The floors here possess noticeable resilience suggesting that the concrete may be a thin slab laid over a wooden subfloor on wood joists. In the drafting room the same material seems to have been used at the window sills.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster is used throughout, but its expanse is almost always reduced in size by means of decorative trim.

5. Doorways and doors: The second floor doors of the house have three horizontal panels at the bottom and square glass panes or a wood panel above. They are oak. The studio doors are of the single panel type of softwood.

6. Decorative features and trim:

   a. Bas-relief sculpture: The living room ceiling is patterned by four false beams running parallel to the walls and about two feet away from them. The pattern thus created makes four square panels at each corner of the room. These each contain an identical plaster casting of Sullivanesque ornament. In the stair hall there is a narrow plaster frieze of classical figures.

   b. Skylight: In the foyer of the office a skylight of three narrow long rectangles illuminates the space. The pattern in the glass uses many small rectangular panels, many of them green.

   c. Trim: The use of wood strips to break wall areas into panels is characteristic of all rooms seen. In the living room the trim is oak carried to the height of about five feet. Panels extend from corners of the room to the edges of openings and do not turn the corners from one plane to its adjoining plane as is seen in Unity Temple. In the bedrooms thin trim is applied to the sloping ceilings parallel to the directions of the roof joists. In the south bedroom, where the ceiling is flat, a large central rectangular pattern decorates the ceiling. The vault of the playroom has narrow strips like ribs of a barrel vault. In the library the octagonal pattern of the room reappears in the ceiling rotated 45 degrees so that angles line up with the midpoints of the sides. In the studio the wall panels extend from baseboard to the height of the doorheads.

   d. Horizontal moldings at frieze level: In the living room the flat casing that constitutes the wooden covering of the wall thickness at the top of the wide doorways appears to continue horizontally around the wall of the room as a thin molding of oak. In the studio, the frieze level moldings are boldly developed and combined with projecting horizontal planes.

e. Illusionistic devices: There are three of these. One constitutes a line of rectangular openings in both sidewalls of the inglenook that enables one to see across the house from the old dining room the inglenook and across to the far wall of the new dining room. Another illusion is similar in effect, but involves the use of a mirror. From the end of the playroom, near the fireplace, one may look the length of the room, down the second floor hall, through a doorway to a mirror on the opposite wall. The illusion of depth is convincing. The last illusion is seen from the same place. Above the same doorway are three balconies diminishing in size. They are in rising tiers constructed in the upper portion of the vaulted ceiling as it passes above other rooms of the house. The height for standing is suitable for small children; the illusion is one of greater distance than is present.

f. Fireplaces: The central fireplace in the inglenook has a facing of orange-colored Roman brick. The opening is arched, constructed of 1-1/2 courses of brick tapered for the purpose. Above the fireplace the wall is paneled in oak carved in Roman letters with the following motto: "Truth is Life. Good Friend, Around These Hearth Stones Speak No Evil Word of any Creature."

The fireplace in the playroom is simple, of brown Roman brick with a mantel 5'-10" high. The drafting room fireplace is stone and there are two blocks of stone at the sides of the base of the fireplace to serve as built-in andirons. The concrete floor also serves as a hearth line.

7. Built-in furniture: At either end of the front bedroom the furniture is built-in. On the south wall is a bureau with a closet on each side of it. A similar arrangement extends across the north wall except that a high boy replaces the bureau. Both library and drafting room have built-in bookcases.

8. Notable hardware: Doors in the house have spherical brass doorknobs. Doors in the studio have flattened round knobs, also brass.

9. Lighting, type of fixtures: The lighting is electric. Notable fixtures occur in the playroom and in the foyer of the studio. In the studio there are four fixtures on cantilevered oak supports. The fixture itself is of yellow

colored glass held together with lead cames. An upward facing square box some six inches on an edge sits upon a square horizontal plane of yellow glass. The form suggests the academic mortarboard, inverted, with the hanging chain for the switch replacing the tassel. In the foyer, half spheres of frosted glass about eight inches in diameter are mounted on the wall in bronze brackets. The open portion of these fixtures also directs light upward.

10. Heating: Central.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The front of the house faces west toward Forest Avenue and the studio is to the north of the house facing Chicago Avenue. The lot is at the southeast corner of Chicago Avenue and Forest Avenue.

2. Landscaping, walks, enclosures: A fence surrounds the site. On Forest Avenue it is composed of an open work pattern in concrete and is low. On Chicago Avenue it is of brick, matching the wall construction. Concrete caps are used. Near the studio the planes of the fence modulate the exterior spaces adjacent to the building. A higher wall encloses a private garden viewed from the library and the private office. Stone urns grace the studio entrance. The planting on the site complements the buildings. At the rear of the lot a tall ginkgo tree is visible from the drafting room.

Prepared by Wesley Shank
Project Supervisor
National Park Service
Summer 1967

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The records of this structure were made during the 1967 Chicago IV Project. This was the fourth in a series of summer projects designed to record the significant architecture of the Chicago area. The project was sponsored by the late Mr. Earl J. Reed, FAIA. He was assisted by John R. Fugard, FAIA, Treasurer, and Miss Agnes E. Hodges of the Chicago Chapter Foundation, and a Selection Committee consisting of James Arkin, AIA; Ruth Schoneman, Art Institute of Chicago; and J. Carson Webster, Northwestern University. Organizations cooperating with HABS in this project were: The Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects; the Chicago Chapter Foundation; the Chicago Community Trust; the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies; the Illinois

Arts Council; and the Chicago Heritage Committee. The Council also made funds available for a Statewide Inventory Project with out-of-Chicago architects cooperating. Quarters were provided at Glessner House through the Chicago School of Architecture Foundation.

Mr. James C. Massey, Chief, Historic American Buildings Survey, was in over-all charge of HABS summer programs. The Project Supervisor was Wesley Shank, Iowa State University. Other members of the summer team were: Historian, Leland Roth, University of Illinois, Urbana; Photographer, Philip Turner; Secretary, Mrs. Burt Schloss; and Student Assistant Architects: Keleal Hassin, Tulane University; Maurice Griffin, Illinois Institute of Technology; Allan Steenhusen and David Vyverberg, Iowa State University.